

Lightning Protection - Don't Be Caught Unprepared!

-W8ISH

Protecting your valuable amateur equipment from lightening hits is a concern for all of us. Nobody wants to replace components because Mother Nature took aim on your favorite transceiver. If you have designed your own lightening protection system following recommendations from your favorite Elmer maybe it's time to call in the experts. For over a decade Mike Koss-W9SU has been designing and installing lightening protection systems. His company, Industrial Communication Engineers, specializes in lightening arrest systems for commercial and amateur radio stations. During the April 21st MARC meeting Mike will explain how hams can better protect their amateur radio equipment. According to Mike, it doesn't cost that much and should be considered a lifetime investment in amateur radio safety.

Field Day 2001 Plans on Agenda

-W8ISH

Plans for Field Day 2001 will be discussed at the April 21st meeting. During the March club meeting several locations were mentioned. Up for consideration is a move to the Greenwood Masonic Lodge, Franklin Walmart parking lot or the Break-O-Day school in Whiteland. Creature comforts, public visibility and making a serious contesting effort are all considerations for FD 2001. Past Field Days have shown marginal success in the points category. Many feel the club should make a stronger effort to win the contest while informing the public about our great hobby. MARC President JR Osborne-KB9HSE will be looking for volunteers in the coming weeks to help organize and conduct a successful Field Day.

***Next Meeting: April 21, 2001 at the
EOC. Be sure to attend!***

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The Mid State Amateur Radio Club

Membership

The Mid-State Amateur Radio Club is based in Franklin, Indiana. Membership is open to all radio amateurs and any other interested parties.

Club meetings are conducted on the third Saturday of each month in the training room of the Johnson County Emergency operations Center at 1100 Hospital Road in Franklin, Indiana.

Membership dues are \$18.00 per year for full members. Other types of membership are available.

Amateur Radio Operator License testing is offered following the club meeting during the months of March through November.

The club operated an open repeater on the 2-Meter band at 146.835 MHz. Each full member has access to the autopatch, and controller functions.

Membership dues and change of address should be mailed to the Club Treasurer at the address below.

Visit us on the web at <http://www.midstatehams.org>

Newsletter

The Spark Gap is the monthly club newsletter. Articles and information that would be of interest to club members are welcome. Information may be submitted by mail to the editor.

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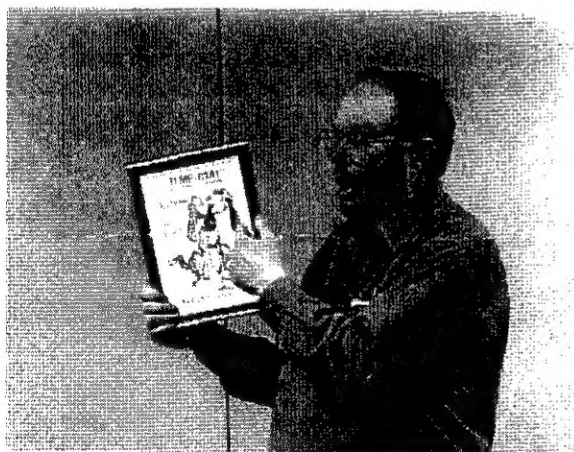
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Local Inventor Speaks to MARC Members

-W8ISH

With an eye toward improving on everyday products, Ron Jackson, president of Jackson System, Inc., told the Mid-State ARC that you too can invent something. He said becoming rich off your brain child may be something else. Ron has 13 patents to his credit and has developed over two dozen inventions for the heating/air conditioning industry. He has also invented several tools including the adjustable plastic clamp found in many hardware stores. According to Jackson over 20-thousand people invest at least \$6500.00 a year to get their inventions patented. He said it can cost up to \$200,000 dollars in some cases. But, he encouraged everyone to let their imagination lead them to inventing the next bigger, better, faster mouse trap.



*You can tell more about a person by
what he says about others than you
can by what others say about him.*

Leo Aikman

March VE Team Results Another Successful Month!

-KF9LQ

The VE testing session after the March Meeting was a success! We would like to extend congratulations to the following people.

Roger L. Turner-----T
Jerry J. Schantz-----T
Malcolm K. Smith-----T
Kristopher o. fox-----T
Christopher W. Hittle-----T
Kimble S. Coffey-----T

David E. Kalmikoff-----G
Peter J. Lenges-----G
Joseph J. Lenges-----G
Kenneth M. Bowman-----G

Daniel J. Taylor-----E
Margaret J. McNary-----E
Steven J. Redmon-----E

Please give these people the welcome and congratulations that they deserve! We hope to see you next month at the meeting.

Wednesday Night Supper Group's April Schedule

-KF9LQ

The Wednesday Night Supper Group will be meeting at the following places in April/May

April 25 Mi Pueblo's Mexican
May 2 Old Country Buffet
May 9 Olive Garden
May 16 Boston Market
May 23 Four Seasons

ARISS REPS THANK SHEPHERD FOR SCHOOL CONTACTS

-ARRL Letter

Representatives of the Amateur Radio on the International Space Station program have personally thanked ISS Expedition 1 crew commander William "Shep" Shepherd, KD5GSL, for his participation in several ARISS school contacts. Several far-flung participants in a last-minute Amateur Radio contact on March 9 were tied in via the Sacred Hearts Academy telebridge facility in Honolulu.

Russian Cosmonaut Yuri Usachev, UA9AD, assumed the helm of the ISS this week as the Expedition 2 commander. The other members of the ISS Expedition 2 crew are US astronaut Susan Helms, KC7NHZ, and US astronaut Jim Voss

ARRL Field and Educational Services Manager Rosalie White, K1STO, thanked Shepherd on behalf of ARRL and AMSAT for taking time out of his busy schedule to speak with students at a seven schools over the past few months. "He affected quite a few young lives," White said.

Since coming aboard the ISS last November, Shepherd has answered questions posed by kindergarten through high school students in Illinois, New York, Virginia, Texas, Hawaii, American Samoa, Arizona and Ontario, Canada.

For his part, Shepherd said he enjoyed his experience with the ARISS school contacts. "I can't tell you how much this

has meant to me. It's been great!" he said. "It's been fun to tell people about it too." Shepherd also complimented the technical quality of the Amateur Radio transmissions.

During the approximately 10-minute pass, ARISS Board Chairman Frank Bauer, KA3HDO, also expressed his appreciation to Shepherd, as did Will Marchant, KC6ROL, who's involved in setting up the operational aspects of each ARISS school contact and coordinating schedules with NASA.

Shepherd requested the contact as his approximately four-month mission aboard the ISS wound down, in part for the opportunity to chat with his wife, Beth, as well as with his good friend and fellow shuttle astronaut Kevin Chilton, KC5TEU and his wife, Sunny.

Handling the contact in Hawaii at Sacred Hearts was Dick Flagg, AH6NM. Also on line from Sacred Hearts was teacher Nancy Rocheleau, WH6PN.

The crew of Shepherd, Yuri Gidzenko, and Sergei Krikalev, U5MIR, heads home this weekend aboard the shuttle Discovery. Marchant said schools in California and Mississippi are on the ARISS school contact schedule for late March and early April.

For more information on the ARISS program, visit the ARISS Web site, <http://ariss.gsfc.nasa.gov>.



From the Editors Desk:

-KB9UJE

I have been playing around a bit this month with the format of the newsletter, and I hope you like the results. The newsletter used to be done on Microsoft Word, which, while effective, had some problems with rendering images and text together. There was also the small matter of it not running on my choice of operating systems.

I am now doing the newsletter on Corel Word Perfect 8, and I have so far been pleased with the results. Please let me know of any comments or suggestions you might have! And as always, I am looking for submissions! Send in those stories!

Repeater News

-KB9UJE

The amplifier is in the process of being tested right now. At the conclusion of the test, we will have a better idea of the best angle in which to attack this project.

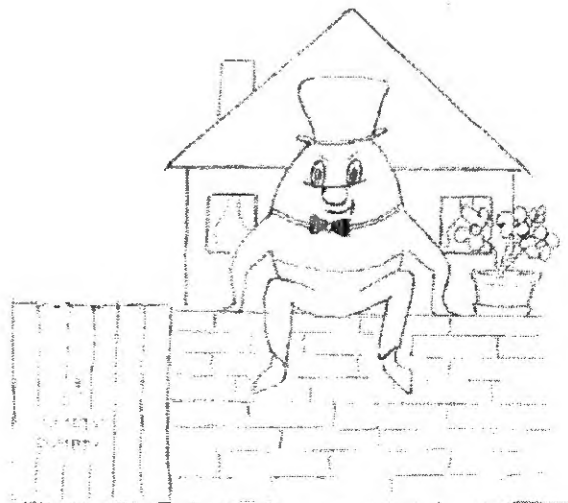
I also have updated the autodial lists on the repeater itself. You will be receiving (hopefully with this newsletter) a new sheet with your autodial number and the repeater access codes. Please check these over. The repeater can call any local number, and can be set to any number you choose. This is especially true of family members who all have autodials. These numbers can be made to dial differently, so as not to waste autodial slots.

Please let me know of any changes that need to be made. Thanks

Can YOU Tell the Difference?

- KF9LQ

Answers are on the back page...



ARRL SEEKS TO EXPAND AMATEUR ACCESS TO 216-220 MHz

-ARRL Letter

The ARRL has suggested that the FCC expand the secondary amateur allocation at 219-220 MHz to provide hams with access to the entire 216-220 MHz band. The League commented this month in response to a Notice of Proposed Rule Making, ET Docket 00-221, that proposes to reallocate 27 MHz of spectrum in various bands, including 216-220 MHz, from government to non-government use.

In general, the FCC seeks to allocate the entire 216-220 MHz band to the Fixed and Mobile services on a primary basis. At 219-220 MHz, Amateur Radio now is secondary to the Automated Maritime Telecommunications System (AMTS).

Within the 1-MHz of spectrum, amateurs may install and operate point-to-point digital message forwarding systems, including inter-city packet backbones, but only under strict limitations.

While the FCC has promised to protect AMTS and other operations from new interference, it extended no such assurances to amateur operations at 219-220 MHz. In its comments, the ARRL expressed fears that additional co-primary users "will essentially foreclose what limited opportunities there are now for amateurs to make use of the 219-220 MHz segment."

The League suggested that in the face of such potential constraints at 219-220 MHz, permitting amateur

access to the entire 216-220 MHz band on a non-interference basis would be one means to accommodate Amateur Radio operations in that portion of the spectrum. Such a move would, the ARRL said, "provide at least some opportunity for amateurs to engineer fixed links into the band, which would not be possible in the 219-220 MHz segment alone."

Last month, in comments filed in PR Docket 92-257, the ARRL suggested letting amateurs submit computer-generated field strength contours that demonstrate a lack of interference potential to AMTS sites, in lieu of having to get written permission. In this proceeding, the ARRL further suggested that amateurs who proposed to operate in the 216-220 MHz band be allowed to use "fixed-distance separations" in lieu of the present consent requirements, as a means to demonstrate the absence of interference potential to AMTS and other co-primary users.

A copy of the ARRL's comments in ET Docket 00-221 is available on the ARRL Web site, <http://www.arrl.org/announce/regulatory/et00-221/index.html>.

*A fellow can't keep people from having
a bad opinion of him, but he can keep
them from being right about it.*

Author Unknown

*Don't take the wrong side of an
argument just because your opponent
has taken the right side.*

Baltasar Gracian

Contests Give MARC Members a chance at Free Membership.

-KB9UJE

Currently, the Mid-State Amateur Radio Club is hosting two contests. Winners will receive a free year's membership! The first contest challenges members to create a new logo for the club. The old monochrome logo is nice, but with today's computer technology, it becomes possible to create a much more detailed logo. The creator is invited to use either the current logo as a template, or create a new logo entirely from scratch. The logo would become the property of the club, and could be used in the newsletter, the website, and club documentation and publications. Any form of software could be used to create the image, or none at all. If using software, please try and save the image to either a .jpg or a .png file, so that they can be used across platforms. If submitted by hand, it can be scanned in as needed in any format. The winner, chosen by vote of the club, will receive a one year membership extension, or a one year initial membership, whichever is applicable.

The second contest challenges participants to come up with a replacement name for the club newsletter. It has been called "The Spark Gap" for many years, and a newer name might reflect the club's new initiative to recruit and promote amateur radio. Again, if the club chooses to use your idea, you will receive a one year membership renewal, or a new membership; whichever is applicable.

Submissions should be sent to the newsletter editor, either by mail, in person, or by e-mail at editor@midstatehams.org. All submissions become the property of the club. Credit will be given for all submissions.

If there are any questions, please contact the editor as described above.

**Del Middleton (K9ZON)
is still in the Hospital,
recovering from Heart
Surgery. His family
asks that you keep him
in your prayers and
thoughts. His
daughters will let us
know when he can have
visitors.**

**Cards can be sent to
him at the following
address...**

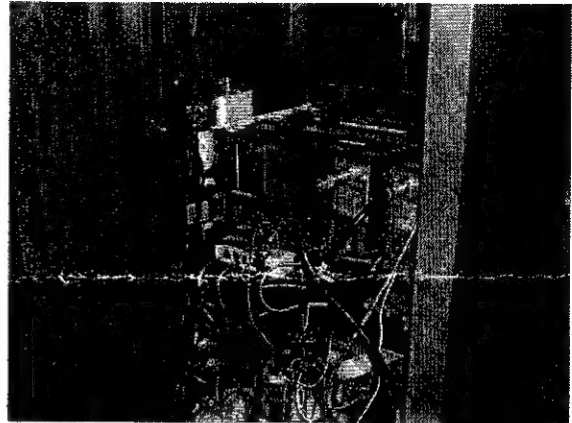
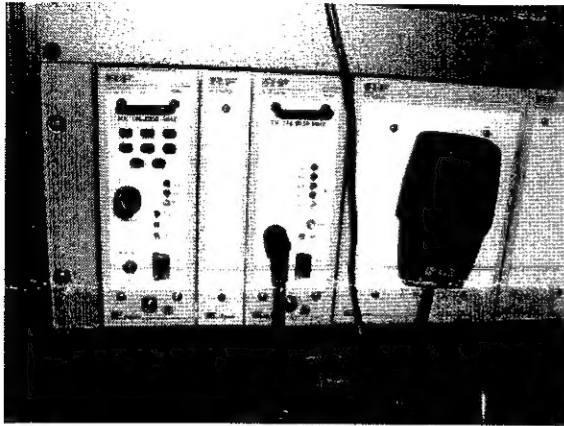
**Del Middleton
116 Orchard Lane
Greenwood, IN 46142**

*The really idle man gets nowhere. The
perpetually busy man does not get
much farther.*

Sir Heneage Ogilvie

Ever Wonder What the WA9RDF Repeater Looks Like?

-Photos by AA9YP



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We repair most brands of
amateur, Business band, CB's and
scanners.

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KA9SWK

Tom Curran
N9DZJ

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LOOK FOR THE RED MAILBOX